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Clay Fischer '12 brings the University's resources to Douglas County

Summary: Fischer works to identify potential internships with Lakes Association

(August 9, 2011)-University of Minnesota, Morris senior Clay Fischer, Pine City, has spent the summer identifying possible internships for his fellow students with the Douglas County Lakes Association. The nonprofit association is in need of interns, and Morris students are in need of internships. As Morris is the closest university, it's a perfect match.

So far, Fischer has identified four major projects: a communications/research position studying invasive species, a project conducting core sampling of ditches around Lake Ida and then hopefully extending outward, a project testing water quality, and a lake shore restoration project. The Douglas County Lakes Association covers three watersheds, a huge undertaking. Fischer's work is only the tip of the iceberg.

Fischer took the position at the suggestion of Karen Mumford, former assistant professor of environmental studies. He said it fit well with his future plans. An environmental studies major with a minor in communications, Fischer believes that "communications is a big part of environmental studies." He says the best part of the project has to be all of the people he's met. He was amazed to find so many people out there who care. He also hopes "it keeps going. It's a cool project and there's a lot of opportunities for all sorts of majors. A lot of different projects can come out of this."

The project received support from the University of Minnesota West Central Sustainability Partnership and the Center for Small Towns.

The University of Minnesota West Central Sustainability Partnership is a legislatively funded initiative led by citizen leaders committed to leveraging University resources to sustain Minnesota's natural resource based economy and empower citizen participation and leadership. The organization has partnered with the Center for Small Towns to sponsor the "Connecting Students and Communities" program that provides financial support to employ Morris students for community-identified projects.

The [Center for Small Towns](#) is a community outreach program housed at the University of Minnesota, Morris and serves as a point-of-entry to the resources of the University. Small towns, local units of government, K-12 schools, nonprofit organizations, and other University units are able to utilize the Center's resources as they work on rural issues or make contributions to rural society. Their mission is to focus the University's attention and marshal its resources toward assisting Minnesota's small towns with locally identified issues by creating applied learning opportunities for faculty and students.

Through personal and academic discovery, the University of Minnesota, Morris provides opportunities for students to grow intellectually, engage in community, experience environmental stewardship and celebrate diversity. A renewable and sustainable educational experience, Morris prepares graduates for careers, for advanced degrees, for lifelong learning, for work world flexibility

in the future, and for global citizenship. Learn more about Morris at morris.umn.edu or call 888-866-3382.